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JUNE 7, 2022

About 5% of young adults in the U.S. say their gender is different from their sex assigned at birth

BY ANNA BROWN



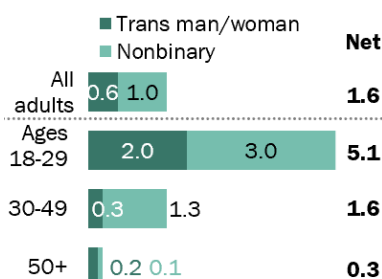
A protester holds the trans flag and snaps in solidarity with other transgender rights advocates during a demonstration outside the Ohio Statehouse on June 6, 2021. (Stephen Zenner/SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty)

At a time when transgender and nonbinary Americans are gaining visibility in the media and among the public, a new Pew Research Center survey finds that 1.6% of U.S. adults are transgender or nonbinary – that is, their gender differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

How we measured the share of the U.S. population that is trans or nonbinary ⊕

In U.S., young adults are the most likely to be transgender or nonbinary

% of U.S. adults who say their gender is different from their sex assigned at birth



Note: Trans men are those who said they were assigned female at birth and described their gender as a man. Trans women are those who said they were assigned male at birth and described their gender as a woman. Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 16-22, 2022.

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Meanwhile, a rising share of Americans say they know someone who is transgender. This analysis accompanies an [essay that examines the experiences and views of trans and nonbinary adults](#) based on a series of focus groups.

Adults under 30 are more likely than older adults to be trans or nonbinary. Some 5.1% of adults younger than 30 are trans or nonbinary, including 2.0% who are a trans man or trans woman and 3.0% who are nonbinary – that is, they are neither a man nor a woman or aren't strictly one or the other. (Due to rounding, subtotals may not add up to the total.) This compares with 1.6% of 30- to 49-year-olds and 0.3% of those 50 and older who are trans or nonbinary.

The share of U.S. adults who are transgender is particularly high among adults younger than 25. In this age group, 3.1% are a trans man or a trans woman, compared with just

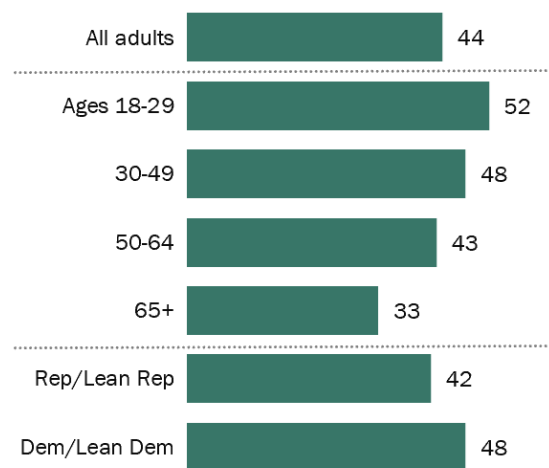
0.5% of those ages 25 to 29. There is no statistically significant difference between these two age groups in the share who are nonbinary or the total share who are trans or nonbinary.

How we did this 

A rising share of adults say they know a transgender person

More than four-in-ten U.S. adults report knowing a trans person

% saying they personally know someone who is transgender



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 16-22, 2022.

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While a relatively small share of U.S. adults are transgender or nonbinary, many say they know someone who is. More than four-in-ten (44%) say they personally know someone who is trans and 20% know someone who is nonbinary.

The share of adults who know someone who is transgender [has increased](#) from 42% in 2021 and from 37% in 2017.

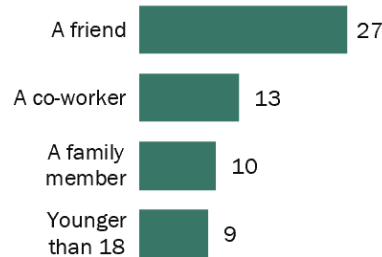
Today, roughly half of adults younger than 30 and those 30 to 49 say they know a trans person – higher than the share among older Americans. Still, a third of those 65 and older report knowing someone who is trans.

Democrats and independents who lean to the Democratic Party are more likely than Republicans and Republican leaners to say they know a transgender person, but Republicans are catching up. As recently as [June 2021](#), 48% of Democrats said they knew a

trans person, compared with 35% of Republicans – a gap of 13 percentage points. Today, 48% of Democrats and 42% of Republicans say this – a gap of just 6 points.

About a quarter of U.S. adults say they have a trans friend

% saying they personally know a trans person who is ...



Note: Respondents were asked about each item individually and could say “yes” to multiple items.

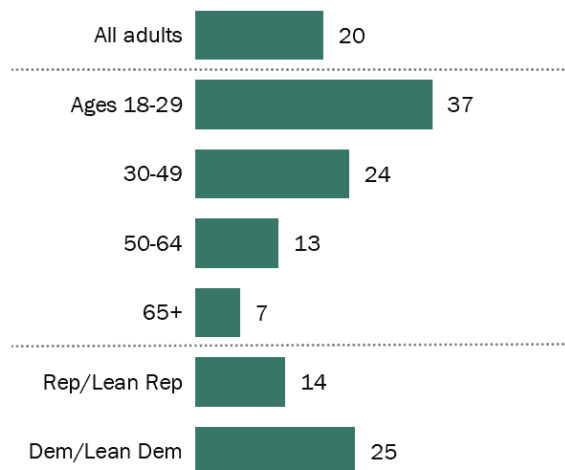
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 16-22, 2022.

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About a quarter of U.S. adults say they have a trans friend (27%), while 13% say they have a co-worker who is trans and 10% say they have a transgender family member. About one-in-ten adults (9%) say they know a trans person who is younger than 18.

One-in-five U.S. adults say they know someone who is nonbinary

% saying they personally know someone does not identify as a man or a woman



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 16-22, 2022.

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When asked if they know someone who doesn't identify as a man or a woman, 20% of U.S. adults say they do. The share is higher among younger adults, those living in urban and suburban communities, those with higher levels of education, and Democrats.

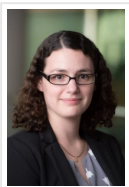
Most Americans (79%) say they have heard at least a little about people not being a man or a woman and instead describing themselves as not having a gender or using terms such as “nonbinary” or “gender fluid” to describe their gender. But only 26% say they have heard a lot about this concept.

Young adults are far more likely to be familiar with this than their older counterparts. About four-in-ten adults younger than 30 (42%) say they have heard a lot about being nonbinary, compared with 31% of those 30 to 49, 20% of those 50 to 64 and 12% of those 65 and older. Still, even older adults have at least some passing familiarity with the idea: Two-thirds of those 65 and older say they have heard at least a little.

A [2021 Pew Research Center survey](#) found that 26% of U.S. adults personally knew someone who goes by gender-neutral pronouns such as “they” instead of “he” or “she,” up from [18% in 2018](#).

Note: Here are [the questions used](#) for this analysis, along with responses, and [its methodology](#).

Topics [LGBTQ Acceptance](#), [Gender Identity](#), [Younger Adults](#)



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